

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STOCKH 00302 241546Z
ACTION SS-25

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R 241414Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
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S E C R E T STOCKHOLM 0302

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, IT, SW
SUBJECT: ITALIAN SITUATION

REF: STATE 15066

1. THE MAIN ELEMENTS IN THE SWEDISH VIEW OF THE ITALIAN
SITUATION MAY BE SET FORTH BRIEFLY:

(A) NO RESPONSIBLE SWEDE WISHES TO SEE THE ITALIAN
COMMUNISTS IN THE GOVERNMENT.

(B) FORMER PRIME MINISTER PALME, INVOLVED IN THIS
ISSUE THROUGH THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL, HAS ARGUED
THAT IN SOUTHERN EUROPE, WHERE THE COMMUNISTS ARE SO
LARGE A PART OF THE ELECTORATE, IT MAY NOT BE FEASIBLE
TO PREVENT THEIR PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT.

(C) THE PRESENT COALITION GOVERNMENT INHERITED
MOST OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY FROM PALME, INCLUDING A
CONCEPT OF "ACTIVE NEUTRALITY" WHICH CALLS FOR VERBAL
DEFENSE OF SMALLER COUNTRIES AGAINST INFRINGEMENT BY THE
SUPER-POWERS.

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(D) SWEDISH PUBLIC OPINION WOULD GENERALLY BE
AGAINST WHAT IT CONSIDERED OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE IN
ITALIAN POLITICS. (THUS LIBERAL-LEFT DAGEN
NYHETER ON JANUARY 14 CALLED USG STATEMENT OF JANUARY
12 "AN UNEXPECTED ERUPTION OF THE OLD SUPER-POWER
NERVOUSNESS. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S MOST DEBATED
ACHIEVEMENTS ARE USUALLY NOT ON THAT LEVEL."

(STOCKHOLM 0181 USIAC.)

(E) RECEPTION BY HIGH SWEDISH OFFICIALS OF THE PCI DELEGATION IN NOVEMBER (77 STOCKHOLM 5047) INDICATES SWEDEN'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION AND ITS WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THE PCI AS ONE OF THE LEGITIMATE ACTORS IN THE ITALIAN POLITICAL DRAME.

(F) ALTHOUGH THE NEUTRAL SWEDES ARE WELL AWARE OF NATO'S VITAL IMPORTANCE FOR THEIR OWN SECURITY, OUR INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS INDICATE THAT MANY SWEDES DO NOT REGARD PCI PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT AS IRREVERSIBLE OR AS THE END OF NATO.

(G) IN SUM, THE SWEDES WOULD ARGUE THAT THE ITALIANS SHOULD BE LEFT TO RESOLVE THEIR OWN GOVERNMENTAL CRISIS AT THIS STAGE.

2. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, WE WOULD EXPECT THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT ANY US OR US-ALLIED STATEMENTS ON COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT WITH GREAT RESERVE. IF THE US TOOK STEPS THAT LED TO PUBLIC CONTROVERSY ABOUT US "INTERFERENCE," WE WOULD EXPECT PALME TO SPEAK OUT VIGOROUSLY, AND IN ALL LIKELIHOOD BE JOINED BY LEADERS OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT.
KENNEDY-MINOTT

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